

REMARKS

Claims 8, 18, and 19 are in this application, with claims 1-7, 9-17, and 20 having been cancelled. The Examiner is thanked for indicating that claims 8, 18, and 19 contain allowable subject matter.

Claims 1-3, 6-7, 9-12, 15-17, and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,222,841 to Taniguchi in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,501,760 to Ohba, et al. Claims 4-5 and 13-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Taniguchi in view of Ohba, and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,538,989 to Carter et al.

Claims 1-7, 9-17, and 20, have been cancelled, however, such cancellation should not be construed as an agreement by Applicants with the Examiner's arguments. Applicants reserve the right to continue prosecution of these rejected claims in one or more continuation applications.

The Office Action further indicates that, claims 8, 18, and 19 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, claim 8 has been rewritten in independent form and, as amended, includes the elements of claim 1. In addition, claim 18 has been rewritten in independent form to include the elements of independent claim 9, and intervening claims 15, 16, and 17. Claim 19 depends from claim 18. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 8, 18, and 19 are allowable.

This is in response to the Examiner's statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter, included in the present Office Action. To the extent the Examiner's statement states, implies or is construed to mean that the claims 8, 18, and 19 are allowable over the prior art of record because the Examiner believes these claims should be interpreted to include one or more features or limitations not recited therein, Applicants' attorney disagree with such an interpretation. Moreover, it is Applicants' contention that there is no particular limitation in the

allowed claims that is more critical than any other. The issuance of the Examiner's statement should not be construed as a surrender by Applicants of any subject matter. It is the intent of Applicants, by their attorney, to construe the allowed claims so as to cover the invention disclosed in the instant application and all equivalents to which the claimed invention is entitled.

The Examiner has apparently made of record, but not applied, several documents. The Applicants appreciate the Examiner's implicit finding that these documents, whether considered alone or in combination with others, do not render the claims of the present application unpatentable.

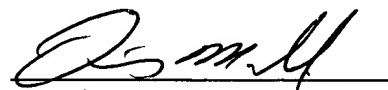
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are allowable. Accordingly, entry of the foregoing amendment is respectfully requested.

Please charge any fees incurred by reason of this response and not paid herewith to Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

Respectfully submitted,
FROMMER LAWRENCE & HAUG LLP

By:



Dennis M. Smid
Reg. No. 34,930
(212) 588-0800